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ABSTRACT

This is an evaluation report on a Title I non-public schools reading skills program that served students in grades 4-8 in New York City in 1979-1980. The program's goal was to provide individualized diagnostic prescriptive reading and writing skills instruction for severely disabled readers. Section one of the evaluation provides a description of the program. An outline of the methods of data analysis is found in the second section and pre and post test student reading scores are given. The third section presents a summary of survey data and teacher interviews that includes: (1) information about teacher respondents; (2) a pupil profile; (3) information on various teaching methods used; and (4) a report on the role of support services and parents. In section four observations regarding classroom, teacher and pupil characteristics are summarized. The fifth section presents a synopsis of interviews with the program coordinator that cover issues including program organization, instructional approaches, student progress and retention, and personnel considerations. The evaluation found that pupils in this program made substantial improvement in reading ability during the course of the year. (APM)

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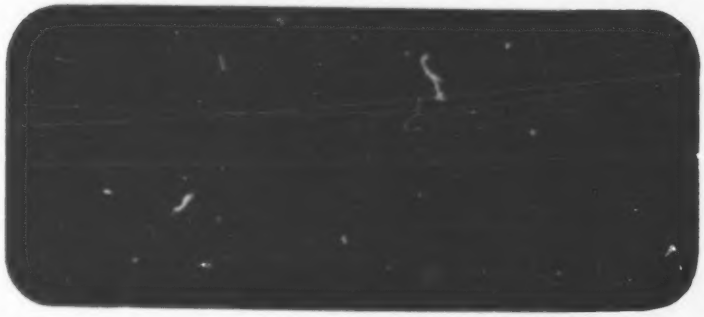

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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

ESEA Title I

Project Identification Number: 5001-64-01623

ESEA TITLE I

NONPUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAMS

READING SKILLS SERVICES

1979-1980

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
I.	PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	1
II.	DATA ANALYSIS	3
	Objectives	3
	Summary and Analysis of Results	3
III.	SUMMARY OF SURVEY DATA AND TEACHER INTERVIEWS	5
	Introduction	5
	Information About Teacher Respondents	6
	Pupil Profile	7
	Teaching Methodology	8
	Pupil Assessment	13
	Support Services	15
	Parent Contact	17
	Recommendations	18
IV.	CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SUMMARY	21
	Introduction	21
	Classroom Characteristics	21
	General Observations	21
	Observation Checklist: Teacher	21
	Observation Checklist: Children	22
V.	SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS WITH PROGRAM COORDINATOR	23
	Introduction	23
	Program Considerations	23
	Instructional Considerations	25
	Student Considerations	27

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT'D)

	Page
Personnel Considerations	28
Recommendations	29
VI. EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	30
Conclusions	30
Recommendations	31

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Title I Nonpublic Schools Reading Skills Program, hereafter called, the Reading Skills Program, served 431 nonpublic school students in grades 4-8 at nine sites; the students are Title I eligible, have severe reading problems, and need one-to-one instruction.* The program's goal is to provide individualized diagnostic-prescriptive reading and writing skills instruction for severely disabled readers. Students demonstrate, through mastery on criterion-referenced tests, their reading proficiency in the areas of word study, vocabulary, comprehension and study skills.

Depending on the severity of the reading problem, students meet with the Reading Skills teacher three to five times per week from 45 to 60 minute sessions. This instruction continues until the student is able to function adequately in the regular nonpublic school classroom and has no further need for supplemental instruction.

The staff included one full time (FTE)** coordinator, 17 FTE teachers, and one FTE secretary. Each teacher provides a minimum of four hours of instruction per day. In addition, a one hour conference period was set up each day to be used by teachers to meet with parents, communicate with nonpublic school personnel, and to diagnose

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*Students are ineligible if they are non-English speaking, receive the services of the Title I Corrective Reading Program or the services of the Title I English as a Second Language Program or are enrolled in a District Reading Program.

**FTE: Full-time equivalent; one FTE is equivalent to one full-time staff position. Some teachers in the program are hired on a part-time or per diem basis, therefore, the amount of teacher in service is expressed in FTE's in lieu of reporting the number of teachers employed.

individual pupil needs.

The purpose of this evaluation report is to report student achievement data, describe program implementation from the teachers' and coordinators' perspectives, and to indicate directions for a more in depth evaluation during the 1980-81 year.

II. DATA ANALYSIS

Objectives

The objective of this program was that students were to achieve gains in performance in reading comprehension greater than would have been expected in the absence of treatment. Reading comprehension was measured by performance on the comprehension subtest of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test, 1976 edition.

USOE Evaluation Model A1 was used to derive the "no-treatment expectation". Pretest raw scores were converted to Normal Curve Equivalents (a type of score which expresses performance in relation to the performance of a nationally representative group of students), NCE's. Posttest scores were also converted to NCE's. It was assumed that, in the absence of treatment, the mean NCE of the group would be the same at posttest as at pretest.

An increase in mean NCE's was interpreted as a gain in performance beyond what would have been expected without treatment.

Grade 4 students were tested on the comprehension subtest of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test, Form B, Green level. Grades 5-8 were tested on the Brown level of the same test.

Summary and Analysis of Results

Of the 431 students reported as program participants, valid pre- and posttest data were submitted for 422 students. The program results are positive (refer to Chart I). On the average, students in Grades 4

through 8 gained 11 NCE's, with a range from 9 to 12 NCE's. In all four grades, students' average performance at posttest was between NCE 34 and NCE 40. These scores are approximately equal to a percentile ranking of 22 and 32, respectively. The pretest NCE means range from 23 to 29, or from the 10th to the 16th percentile. Thus, these students have made major gains during their year in the Reading Skills Center.

Correlated t-tests were performed on all raw scores and NCE's for each grade level. All gains were statistically significant beyond the .001 level.

CHART I.

READING COMPREHENSION SCORES FOR STUDENTS IN SKILL CENTERS, GRADES 4-8

		Raw Scores		NCE's		Mean Gain
		Pre	Post	Pre	Post	in NCE's
Grade 4	Mean	30	43	25	37	11
N=44	Median	31	46	27	37	
Grade 5	Mean	15	24	24	36	12
N=89	Median	15	24	27	38	
Grade 6	Mean	17	28	23	34	11
N=90	Median	17	28	26	36	
Grade 7	Mean	23	35	26	35	9
N=105	Median	22	36	29	36	
Grade 8	Mean	31	40	29	40	11
N=94	Median	33	42	30	40	

III. SUMMARY OF SURVEY DATA AND TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Introduction

Data for the responses were collected from 16 teachers who completed the survey at a group meeting at the end of the school year. The survey was constructed based on results from the teacher interviews pretested and revised by the Office of Educational Evaluation with assistance from the central Title I Nonpublic School Program administrators.

Data from the interviews were collected in three schools over the period from May 29, 1980 to June 10, 1980. Each site visit included observing the Title I reading skills class and interviewing the teacher. A total of four reading skills teachers were observed and interviewed; two reading teachers were interviewed at one site because there was ample time to complete both interviews. This was not the case at the other sites; at these sites, the teacher whose last name was closest to "Z" was interviewed. The sites for the evaluation were selected randomly from a stratified sample of schools in the Title I Nonpublic School Reading Skills Program.

The interview form was constructed, pretested, and revised by the Office of Educational Evaluation with assistance from the Central Title I Nonpublic School Program administrators. The interviewer was trained in the use of the form before the interviews began. Teachers being interviewed were informed of the purpose of the interview: to feed information back to the program coordinator for administrative and evaluative purposes. The teachers were assured of complete confidentiality, and their responses are all reported anonymously. Each interview took between 45 and

50 minutes. The mean interview time was 48 minutes.

Given the fact that the number of interviewed teachers was small (N=4), data percentages will not be noted and the narrative statements will tend to be brief.

Information About Teacher Respondents

Teaching Experience. The survey data indicated that 13% of the 17 teachers had total teaching experience of one to five years, 44% had six to ten years, 31% had 11 to 15 years, 6% had 16 to 20 years and 6% had more than 20 years of teaching experience.

All four of the interviewed teachers had over five years of teaching experience; two had taught six to ten years, one had taught 11 to 15 years and one had over twenty years of experience.

Teaching Experience In Title I Nonpublic School Program. Experience in the Title I Nonpublic School Program for teachers responding to the survey was 13%, one year, 0%, two years, 19%, three years, 25%, four years, 44%, more than five years. Of the interviewed teachers, two teachers had four years experience in the Title I Nonpublic School Program and two teachers had five years experience in the program.

Educational Background. All survey respondents indicated that they had an MA/S degree. All four interviewed teachers had an MA/S degree; two had 30 credits over the masters degree.

Professional Development and Activities. Over the past three years, 81% of those responding to the survey had earned college credits, 31% attended non-Title I Board of Education workshops, 13% took United Federation of Teachers' courses, 81% participated in Title I workshops, 69%

attended local and national professional conferences, 63% participated in publisher's materials workshops and 25% took other non-credit courses.

During the three years, one interviewed teacher had taken courses for college credits, two are International Reading Association members and all four teachers have attended workshops and/or in-service programs.

Pupil Profile

Number of Students Taught. The average number of pupils taught by the survey respondents was approximately 27. Each of the four teachers interviewed had a total of 25 students at all sites.

Criteria for Selection. All teachers indicated that children who were severely disabled readers were eligible for the program and three teachers identified low achievers in reading as also being eligible. Also mentioned as criteria of selection for the children in reading skills classes were Science Research Associates test scores (SRA) and Metropolitan Achievement test scores (MAT). All interviewed teachers indicated that a student must meet the nonpublic school Title I guidelines.

Participants in Selection. All of the surveyed teachers reported that the Title I teacher participated in the selection of the children for the program. Other responses were nonpublic school principal, 81%; nonpublic school classroom teacher, 63%; Title I guidance counselor, 50%; and other Title I teachers, 69%.

The interviewed teachers reported that people participating in the

student selection were Title I teachers (4),* the nonpublic school principal (3), classroom teachers (2), Title I corrective reading teacher (2) and the Title I guidance counselor (1).

Most Common Learning Problems. On the survey, teachers were given a list of eight learning problems and asked to identify the three most common to the students they taught. Percentages of teacher responses were as follows: 13%, problems from other achievement areas; 31%, attention problems; 50%, language problems; 6%, behavioral problems; 44%, poor listening skills; 31%, poor self-image (including fear of failure); 63%, retention skills; and 56%, general problems in concept formation.

Interviewed teachers mentioned a wide variety of learning problems. Most frequently reported were poor comprehension, short attention span, limited language development, and limited language experience (children from Spanish-speaking families). (See Table 1, page 9, for a listing of the teachers' responses.)

Teaching Methodology

Major Areas of Focus. Teachers were asked to indicate on the survey the major areas of focus of their instruction: 94%, diagnostic-prescriptive reading; 94%, diagnostic-prescriptive writing; 94%, comprehension; 81%, work attack skills; 81%, decoding; 75%, sentence structure; 69%, word power; 63%, work-study skills; and 56%, paragraph structure.

All interviewed teachers indicated the following areas of focus for

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*Numbers in parenthesis indicate the number of respondents selecting or giving a particular response.

TABLE I

LEARNING PROBLEMS AS REPORTED BY
TEACHER INTERVIEWEES (N=4)

Problems	Number of Responses
Poor comprehension	2
Short attention span	2
Limited language development	2
Limited language experience (children from Spanish speaking families)	2
Low self-esteem	1
Poor background in phonics	1
Low confidence in reading ability	1
Limited experiential background	1
Poor concept vocabulary	1
Difficulty in differentiating sounds	1
Poor visual memory	1
Poor word attack skills	1
Poor socio-economic background	1
Emotional problems	1
Physical problems--need glasses	1
Poor sequential output of skills	1

instruction: word attack skills, decoding, word power, comprehension, work and study skills, sentence structure, diagnostic-prescriptive reading and diagnostic-prescriptive writing. Also, three of the four teachers indicated that paragraph structure was an area of focus. Other areas of focus identified were: reading in content areas, punctuation, and vocabulary.

Time Allocation. The amount of time spent on different instructional groupings was consistent across teachers. Three teachers said they spent 75%-85% of their time on individual instruction. All teachers responding indicated that time was spent on diagnosis, but this was an on-going process associated with the individualized instruction. Although all three teachers indicated that they did spend time in whole group instruction, this never exceeded 25% of the total teaching time.

Motivation. The survey asked teachers to indicate the methods or techniques they used to motivate students; they responded: 93.8%, graphs for self-tracking; 81.2%, reward systems (stars, stamps, etc.); 81.2%, other pupil self-evaluation techniques; 25%, games; 25%, other manipulatives. Teachers in the survey were asked to indicate the behavioral changes they were aware of as a result of the increased motivation. These were: know what to do without asking 63%; willingness to try more difficult materials, 50%; more pupil participation in Title I classroom activities, 50%; better self-image, 38%; greater rapport with teacher 19%; and more attentive, 13%.

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*One teacher would not respond to this question indicating the program was individualized.

Three of the four interviewed teachers identified machines (A-V equipment, cassettes, etc.) as a motivating tool they used. Two of the interviewed teachers also indicated that they use high interest materials (e.g., NFL baseball reading kits) and try to focus in on the child's interests and experiences. Other specific motivational techniques mentioned by one teacher each included: motivating the child through the teacher's own interests, creating anticipation to stimulate the child's interest and encouraging the pupil to follow-up on their own, low pupil-teacher ratio, graphing student progress (self-competition) and "breaking the code" in the High Intensity Learning System (HILS) Program.

Interviewed teachers commented that as a result of increased motivation, they have noted the children are more outgoing (2), more verbally communicative (2), more willing to try difficult materials (2), reading to each other and themselves more frequently (1), learning to follow directions (1), aware of what to do without asking (1),and feeling independent because they have a "job" (1).

Peer Tutoring, Independent Study, and Individualized Instruction. Sixty-three percent of the teachers responding to the survey reported that their students were involved in peer tutoring. Sixty-nine percent reported that their students were involved in independent study activities.

During the interviews, three teachers indicated that their students were involved in peer tutoring. This took the form of older children helping younger children or a child, who had finished early, proof-reading another child's work. All of the teachers interviewed reported that their students participated in self-evaluation and three teachers stated that their students did independent study.

Writing Skills, Survey Results.* All of the teachers responded that they use the writing of a journal in connection with teaching writing. Fifty percent indicated that the journal writing had been extremely effective for the diagnosis of writing skills as compared to using a diagnostic tool. Other responses were very effective, 38%; and somewhat effective, 13%. Teachers were given three areas of growth and asked if they could detect any growth in the students' writing from the review of the pupil journals: 100% indicated growth in ability to express oneself, 100% reported growth in the ability to write in longer units and 94% reported growth in sentence sense.

Writing Skills, Interview Results. Each of three teachers, responding to a question on improvement,** indicated pupil improvement in different areas: "vocabulary, spelling and word usage improvement and a better understanding of the main idea when they were taught paragraph structure"; "when children write their own work, they are able to read it"; and, "children realize that writing is talking written down and that it is a real method of communication."

All interviewed teachers had a different preference for a weekly time schedule for teaching writing. One teacher had no preference. One teacher indicated that she would like to teach writing everyday for the first ten minutes of the class period. Another preferred to teach it one day a week as a group lesson and the fourth teacher indicated her prefer-

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*In appendix are Writing Skills Guidelines, Writing Skills Diagnostic Profile Sheets and Writing Skills Scope and Sequence of Program.

**Evaluator omitted this question from one interview.

ence was to teach writing twice a week during the 60-minute classes.

Journal writing was used by all four teachers in connection with teaching writing. Teachers indicated that the journal writing had not only been an effective diagnostic tool but had also been effective in teaching punctuation, sentence expansion and usage.

All teachers indicated that their students had grown in sentence sense, the ability to express themselves effectively and the ability to write in longer units. Two teachers reported that the students have gone from writing sentences to writing stories and compositions.

Pupil Assessment

The following table summarizes the teachers' responses on the survey to pupil assessment methods.

TABLE 2

PERCENT OF TEACHERS USING VARIOUS ASSESSMENTS
AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR AND DURING THE YEAR

Method	Used at Beginning	Used During Year
1. Nonpublic School Program Assessment	50%	44%
2. An Informal Reading Test	56%	63%
3. A Standardized Norm Referenced Test	75%	44%
4. Teacher Made Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT)	38%	56%
5. A Commercially Made CRT	100%	100%
6. Conference with Classroom Teacher	63%	69%
7. Classroom Observation	0%	63%

Teachers were asked to check on the survey the two major purposes for which they used the results of the initial pupil assessment: 100%, to individualize instruction; 63%, for diagnosis; 13%, to evaluate progress;

13%, for lesson plans; and 13%, to teach pupils self-evaluation.

All teachers used the Stanford Diagnostic Test for assessment at the beginning of the year. Two teachers also used SRA or MAT scores, two teachers used the Random House High Intensity Learning System and one used informal observation check-in lists for initial assessment.

The initial pupil assessment was used by all teachers to individualize instruction and to fulfill Title I program requirements. Other purposes of the initial assessment reported were: to plan long-range lessons (3), to evaluate progress (2), to organize group work (1), to diagnose (1) and to plan short-term lessons (1).

The Random House High Intensity Learning System check-in and check-out tests were administered by all teachers to reassess the students' progress during the year. The frequency of this testing ranged from every two to three days to once a month depending on the skill and on the individual child. Three of the four teachers also indicated that they reassess students through daily observations. One teacher conducts (approximately ten times a year) book conferences with children to discuss the books each child has read.

Pupil re-assessments were used by all interviewed teachers to evaluate progress and to individualize instruction (3), to help the child to become a stronger balanced reader (2), to organize group work (1), to plan long-range lessons (1), and to plan short-range lessons (1).

Student Records. For each child, all four interviewed teachers kept records of: the student's diagnostic assessment of reading and writing needs; specific instructional objectives in word study, vocabulary, comprehension and study skills; prescribed reading and writing objectives;

student mastery of objectives; daily attendance; and standardized and criterion-referenced tests. Additional records kept by teachers included lesson plans (in a plan book); a daily log noting conferences and pupil work/problems; and folders on students' progress from past years.

Related Duties. Interviewed teachers were asked to specify their duties related to teaching. All teachers reported that they selected pupils, administered tests, defined short- and long-range objectives, individualized lesson plans, evaluated pupil progress, scheduled pupils for instruction, met with parents, made clinical/guidance referrals and discussed pupil status with other Title I staff. Two teachers indicated that they directed the activities of the para-professional.

Materials Used. All of the interviewed teachers indicated that the materials they have in their classrooms are appropriate for the pupils they teach. In addition, all responded that the materials in their classrooms are helpful to them in the manner in which they teach. Selection of materials was identified by all four teachers as being provided by the Title I central staff; two teachers indicated that the Title I teacher helped to select materials.

Support Services

Clinical and Guidance. The results of the survey item asking teachers to specify all those who refer pupils to clinical and guidance services were: 100%, Title I teacher; 69%, nonpublic school principal; 88%, other Title I teachers; 94%, nonpublic school classroom teacher and 13%, parents. These Title I clinical and guidance services were rated extremely effective by 25% of the teachers surveyed, 25% rated the services very effective, and 50% rated the services as somewhat effective.

The interviewed teachers indicated that the Title I teachers refer students to the clinical and guidance services. The regular classroom teacher also can refer student (1). All of the interviewed teachers found these services to be effective.

Nonpublic School Principal. Teachers answering the survey indicated they receive support from the nonpublic school principal through orientations to school procedures, 81%; scheduling, 69%; arranging conferences with the regular nonpublic school classroom teachers, 44% and monthly conferences, 19%.

All of the interviewed teachers indicated that the principal of their school encourages coordination with regular classroom teachers, provides orientation to school procedures, and makes scheduling decisions. Three interviewed teachers noted that they received support from their principals in the following ways: the principal's attendance at the monthly conferences, the principal's respects for the program, and the principal's assistance in gaining the cooperation of parents, students, and teachers.

Title I Central Staff. On the survey, 94% of the teachers stated that the Title I central staff provided training/orientation; 88%, supervisory visits; 81%, demonstration of instructional methods; 81%, resource materials; 69%, teacher evaluation of suggested techniques; 63%, follow-up conference notes; 44%, assistance in testing/diagnosis; and 38% assistance in pupil selection.

All four interviewed teachers identified the following as support services they had received from the Title I central staff: training and

orientation, demonstration of instructional methods, resource materials, follow-up conference notes, evaluation of suggested teaching techniques, and supervisory visits. Other support services provided were: assistance in testing and diagnosis (2), assistance in pupil selection (1), guidance services and psychologists (1), and accessibility for phone contact (1).

Parent Contact

Number and Frequency. The survey reveals that the teachers meet an average of 40.4% of the parents. Thirty percent of the teachers reported seeing parents on a continuous basis, either weekly or monthly; 65.1% saw parents every reporting period; and 88.9% indicated they met with parents on a yearly basis.

Results of the interviews revealed that the number of parents met at each site ranged from six to 14. The mean number of parents met was 11.* Two teachers see some parents daily, one teacher sees some parents weekly and all teachers see some parents every reporting period.

Method. Contacts with parents reported by teachers responding to the survey were face-to-face (80.5%), by telephone (29.7%), by written communication (100%) and in parent/tutorial workshops (80.3%).

Most of the communication between parents and interviewed teachers was face-to-face. Two teachers used the phone as a means of communication and all used written communication (which include the Progress Reports which are issued twice a year).

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*More parent contact is being provided for the students than this figure indicates; in some instances the para-professionals meet parents with the teacher present.

Initiation. On the survey, 100% of the teachers indicated that they initiated the majority of teacher-parent contacts.

One of the interviewed teachers indicated that initial contact is made by the Title I teacher and the other three indicated that the parents had made ther initial contact.

Classroom and Home Involvement. Parental involvement in the classroom is reported by interviewed teachers to be primarily through individual conferences to discuss their child's progress. Two teachers indicated that parents came to observe; two indicated workshops had been held for parents, and one teacher indicated that parents were involved in tutoring.

Interviewed teachers indicated that at home the parents discussed books with their children; parents have asked teachers for books to take home and read with their children; and parents watched the television news with their children.

Major Concern of Parents. All teachers responding to the survey reported that the parents' major concern was that their children approach grade level academic performance.

Interviewed teachers report the major concerns of the parents to be: reading score improvement (2), children watch too much television (1), acceptance of the child to a good high school (1), and ways in which parents can help at home (1).

Recommendations

Survey Results. On the survey, teachers were given seven recommendations and asked to indicate which was most important for the improvement of the Title I program. The responses were:

44% - No significant improvement is required.

19% - More Title I teacher involvement in materials selection.

19% - More opportunity for coordination with the nonpublic classroom teachers.

13% - More workshops based Title I teacher input (re: teaching techniques).

6% - Fewer students seen more often.

General. Overall, morale of the Reading Skills teachers was very high. The reading teachers felt that the program was well suited for the children they taught.

Two teachers had concern about the child's removal from the regular classroom while he/she is in the Title I class; the child misses work being done in the regular classroom. One teacher felt more interaction between the Title I teacher and the regular teacher would alleviate some of the problems this presents. The other teacher recommended that the child be removed from only one content area allowing the Title I teacher to reinforce the subject manner the child was missing.

Another teacher indicated that she would like machines--specifically additional tape recorders and a rexograph machine.

Other recommendations were:

Materials. One teacher recommended more library books because a certain percentage are lost each year.

Coordination with Regular Classroom Teacher. The Title I teacher confers periodically with the nonpublic school classroom teacher to ascertain the specific needs and weaknesses of the assigned pupils. Evaluation of pupil achievement and progress reports are reviewed with

nonpublic school staff. However, one teacher indicated more communication was needed. It should be noted that Constitutional limitations and judicial decisions determine the extent to which Title I staff are involved in the nonpublic school instructional program.

IV. CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SUMMARY

Introduction

Three sites of the nine sites were visited. Classroom observations varied in time from 30 minutes to 60 minutes. All three observations took place in the morning; the earliest started at 9:45 A.M. and all observations were completed by 12:30 P.M.

Classroom Characteristics

All three classrooms were adequate with regards to lighting, orderliness, space, ventilation, freedom from external noise, and flexibility.

General Observations

Individualized instruction was observed in all classrooms. Also, children were assigned individual, small group or whole group tasks. The teacher would then circulate and help students. The High Intensity Learning System Program was observed being used in all classrooms. Small group work was observed in two of the classrooms.

Observation Checklist: Teacher

All of the teachers were observed working along with the children; helping children to solve academic problems; encouraging and reinforcing children in their work; giving feedback to children on their progress; and providing individual pupil conferences. Teachers were also observed talking with children about their activities for the instruction period, having general discussions with the pupils, encouraging the children to work independently, and encouraging the children to work together.

TABLE 3

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST: TEACHER

(Number of Classrooms = 3)

Activities	Number of Teachers Observed
Encourages children to work independently	1
Encourages children to work together	1
Talks with children about their activities for the instruction period	2
Works along with children	3
Encourages/reinforces children in their work	3
Gives feedback to children on their progress	3
Pupil diagnosis/prescription	0
General discussions with pupil(s)	2
Individual pupil conference	3

Observation Checklist: Children

In all classrooms children were observed working independently. Children's work was visibly displayed in all classrooms. There was no overt anti-social behavior observed.

TABLE 4

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST: CHILDREN

(Number of Classrooms = 3)

Activities	Number of Classrooms Observed
Work independently	3
Work in small groups independent of teacher	0
Overt anti-social behavior	0
Children's work is visibly displayed in classroom	3

V. SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW WITH PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Introduction

The Program Coordinator has been involved with Title I programs in reading since 1968--three and a half years as a corrective reading teacher, seven years as corrective reading supervisor and one year as the Reading Skills Program Coordinator. The interview with the program coordinator lasted one hour, 50 minutes.

Program Considerations

Goals. The Program Coordinator specified several educational goals and philosophic orientations: (1) to identify and remediate student teahniques include teacher-made and commercial materials; (2) to establish rapport between the teachers and pupils; she stressed that this rapport is essential before learning can take place; (3) to eastablish a non-threatening environment for the students and create an atmosphere of trust; (4) to create a democratic classroom where children are a part of the teaching-learning process; and, (5) to engage children in the learning process so that the children will understand their own needs, know why they are there, what they are doing, and be part of the evaluation process.

These goals were developed by assessing the needs of the target population through diagnostic and standardized test results, results from previous evaluations, current research in learning methodologies, explor-

ation of newer materials on the commercial market and input from reading skills teachers via their pupil evaluations.

The goals have changed since the beginning of the program largely as a result of changes in State mandates. This year the State-mandated writing program was instituted. New teaching methodologies were employed, along with the purchase of new materials to foster the development of the writing program. Other changes in the program included increased teacher participation in materials selection* and more encouragement of parental cooperation.

Strengths and Needs. The program coordinator indicated several strengths of the program. The first one she mentioned was the individual diagnostic-prescriptive approach coupled with the small teacher-pupil ratio. This approach is possible because of the variety of materials in all skill areas, and the effective classroom management system (criterion-referenced testing, mastery learning and others). The instructional staff was aided by inter-visitations, conferences, demonstration lessons, observations, and staff training bulletins. In addition, the small supervisor-staff ratio encourages flexibility. It was also noted that the supervisor has a car which makes it easier to meet with the program's teachers. The coordinator also indicated that there was cooperation and support from the Title I Director and Assistant Director and open channels of communication with other Board of Education agencies.

To strengthen the program, the Coordinator suggested continued work in developing oral language facility and furthering concept development.

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*See Appendix for a copy of the evaluation form used by teachers to assess materials they used in classroom.

In addition, she suggested continued teacher training in the areas of writing skills and awareness of pupil's needs. Changes anticipated or planned include introducing professional literature, follow-up work on sentence combining and sentence expansion and a continued focus on the writing skills program in the form of continued research, use of the teacher-made materials, and purchase of more commercially-made materials.

Purpose of Program Assessment. Program assessments were used to determine the degree to which the specific reading and writing skill objectives were attained by the individual pupils, to further identify the needs of the target population, to develop the curriculum and incorporate necessary changes, to assess materials (and thus influence what materials to purchase), and to evaluate teacher training.

Instructional Considerations

Approaches to Instruction. Within the individualized diagnostic-prescriptive approach, a wide variety of methods to teach reading and writing were utilized. The students are grouped together for instructional purposes--to be paired with tutors or to form small groups based on pupil interests. Teachers used a variety of materials to explain and refine a skill--bulletin boards, demonstrations, reference materials and the like. Other methods used were language experience, direct instruction, phonics, and emphasis on the task analysis of the skills.

Daily Lesson. General components of the daily lesson should include journal writing, sustained reading, one-to-one diagnosis of pupils needs, direct skill instruction, mastery testing, and some type of reinforcement activity to remediate specific weaknesses using commercially prepared materials.

Motivation. The Program Coordinator indicated that motivation must be directly related to the objective and aims to tap the needs, interests, and abilities of the student. Specific techniques included questioning strategies, using the child's experiential background; the use of pictures, diagrams and physical representations; discussions, demonstrations and explanations; audio-visual materials (machines, cassettes and other); and reading stories aloud.

Overlap Between What is Taught and What is Tested. The program coordinator stated that there is an overlap between what is taught and what is tested. The program has specific objectives outlined in the materials and the mastery tests are directly related to the attainment of these objectives. Further, the analysis of the journal writing is directly related to the instructional program. This overlap is indicated by the high correlation between the needs of the students (indicated by the standardized tests) and the skills the coordinator observed being taught in the classrooms.

Introduction of New Ideas/Approaches/Topics. Because this was the program coordinator's first year, she was only able to speak of the changes implemented this year. The writing program was initiated this year using the individualized prescriptive approach focusing on the skills and techniques of sentence combining, sentence expansion and diagnostic profiles on writing skills. Teachers were encouraged to implement an oral and listening vocabulary development program using the pupil's experiential background and to develop oral communication skills (as a prerequisite to writing skills).

These ideas/approaches/topics were introduced to the teachers in

staff training sessions using the following techniques: demonstration lessons; workshops; staff bulletins (as follow-ups to the demonstration lessons and workshops); presentation of current research to the teachers at conferences; and disseminating information about local reading councils, fairs, and exhibits. In addition, teachers were observed (informally and formally) to see if various ideas/approaches/topics had been used in the classroom. If the coordinator observed the teacher using skills, materials or ideas in the classroom that had been previously demonstrated, a note of praise was sent to the teacher after the field visit stating the specific skill that had been implemented.

Student Considerations

Reporting a Student's Progress. The student gets feedback on his progress in a number of ways. The High Intensity Learning System program includes check-in/check-out tests which are used regularly (daily to weekly depending on the need). Wall charts are used daily. Pupil-teacher conferences also provide the student with an evaluation of his/her progress. Students also see their progress reports which are issued twice a year.

Written progress reports are issued to the parents twice a year. The teachers are also available for individual and group conferences. The frequency of these conferences varies with the need of the child and the availability of the parents.

The principals are given special reporting forms which indicate the results of the posttesting. There is also on-going communication between the teachers and the school principals as needed. Nonpublic school classroom teachers are also provided with Pupil Profile Reports indicating

strengths and weaknesses in skill areas.

Retention of Students. The guidelines for selecting a student are built into the program. A child can stay until he/she reaches grade level at which time they leave the program. There is no limit to the number of years a student can remain in the program.

Personnel Considerations

Coordinator's Responsibilities. Formal observations are employed to evaluate teachers. The teachers are assessed by observing to what degree they have implemented the guidelines and approaches/ideas/topics introduced to them in workshops, conferences, staff bulletins and the like. Teachers are formally evaluated once a year. There are also unannounced site visits. If a teacher's performance is observed to be unsatisfactory, the program coordinator would plan teacher training sessions, discuss the situation with the Program Director and follow the established Board of Education procedures, if necessary.

The program coordinator reported that she meets the responsibility of relating to other Title I coordinators through on-going communication with the coordinators of the other Title I services. There is informal communication regarding materials, methodologies, staff training programs, specific pupil needs, scheduling and the like. Title I Clinical and Guidance Program sends to the coordinators pertinent data monthly.

Program change and the development of staff are the result of: attending conventions, conferences, and training sessions; following current research; reviewing new materials; developing staff training programs; and communicating with other Board of Education divisions.

Strengths and Needs of Instructional Staff. The Program Coordinator indicated that the greatest strengths of the instructional staff were their diagnostic techniques, evaluation techniques (check-in and check-out mastery testing), methods of reporting data (pupil record keeping), and communicating with the other supportive Title I services staff and the classroom teacher in the nonpublic school.

Recommendations

The Program Coordinator's recommendations were related to staff development activities:

- The instructional staff should be strengthened in the use of tools for evaluation in the writing skills component.
- Teachers should assist pupils in developing language facility, especially oral and listening vocabulary.
- Teachers should be given additional instruction in the primary scoring, interpretation, and use of the California Achievement Test data. (The program will be using the CAT for the first time next year in place of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test.)

VI. EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Students in the Reading Skills Center showed significant improvement in reading achievement as measured by the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test. On the average, students who took both the pretest and posttest gained 11 NCE's. Given that the State Education Department has set the gain of 1 NCE as the minimum criterion for programs to demonstrate significant educational impact, it can be concluded that pupils in this program have made substantial improvement in reading ability during the course of this year.

Observations and interviews revealed the following information related to program implementation. In all classrooms, children were observed working independently and student work was visibly displayed. Teachers expressed satisfaction with the instructional materials they had received and the staff training provided by the program coordinator. Overall, morale was high; both teachers and the program coordinator were pleased to be working in the program. These statements are supported by the fact that 44% of the surveyed teachers felt that the program needed no significant improvement.

Furthermore, communication between the teachers and the program coordinator was excellent. The coordinator's perceptions of the instructional needs of students were in accordance with teacher preceptions. specifically, 50% of the teachers identified language problems as one of the three most common learning problems of students they taught; 44% identified poor listening skills as a major learning problem. The coordinator showed awareness of student problems in these areas in her recommendation

that teacher training sessions be devoted to developing oral language facility.

Recommendations

Since the writing component and the development of oral vocabulary and listening skills were new features to the program this year, the evaluation team supports the coordinator's recommendations that: (1) staff development in these areas be continued, and (2) the implementation of these components be monitored.

Since the journal writing technique was identified by teachers as an effective tool in the teaching of writing, especially punctuation, sentence use, and sentence e pansion, it is recommended that this technique be continued. Methods should be developed to evaluate the pupils' journal writing; and the impact of the writing program on reading achievement should be assessed.